

reflect the excellence of our civil service as a whole. They have each been selected by a blue ribbon panel which includes Senator SUSAN COLLINS, in concert with Partnership for Public Service, to receive a Service to America medal.

When she began her job as Director of the Office of Public Housing Programs in 2002, Nicole Faison inherited a HUD rental system program rated for 13 years as a "high risk" program by the Government Accountability Office due to rampant waste, fraud, and abuse. Today, it is recognized for helping more low-income families receive housing assistance without wasting resources. Under Nicole's guidance, the program eliminated over \$2 billion in fraudulent payments and earned praise for its streamlined operations.

Since 9/11, there has been much attention on the security of cargo containers entering our country from overseas. Leading the charge to secure our ports, Tracy Mustin serves as Director of the Department of Energy's office of Second Line of Defense. Under Tracy's leadership, her office has installed monitoring devices at more than 100 airports, seaports, and border crossings in over 40 countries which help detect and prevent the trafficking of nuclear or radiological substances. She also oversees the Megaports Initiative, which screens and monitors cargo entering major seaports around the world. In addition to her responsibilities as a civil servant, Tracy is commissioned as a captain in the Navy Reserve.

While Tracy and her team have been fortifying our Nation's second line of defense against terrorism, brave men and women in the Armed Forces remain overseas fighting on the first line of defense. When our wounded warriors return home, they can thank the dedicated civilian employees of our Defense Department for significant advancements in the treatment and care they will receive for their injuries.

Dave Carballeyra, the Air Force's Director of Stereolithography, introduced a new 3-D technology for bone and tissue imaging which has improved treatment and rehabilitation care for wounded veterans. In particular, his work has helped soldiers suffering from severe burns from bombings in Iraq and Afghanistan and those requiring surgery to attach prosthetic devices. These advances have significantly improved their quality of life. Believe it or not, Dave is only 25 years of age.

Another public servant whom I very much want to mention is Dr. Rajiv Jain. Each year it is estimated that 2 million patients develop infections while in U.S. hospitals for routine procedures. One hundred thousand of these patients die as a result, and the elderly and newborn are particularly susceptible. Rajiv and his team at the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Pittsburgh are at the forefront of an effort to reduce these infections. The infection rate at their VA facility has already

dropped 60 percent, and the strategy developed by Rajiv to prevent infections has now been adopted by all 153 VA hospitals.

When asked about his work, he commonly explains that "one infection is too many."

The final person I will mention, who works for the Department of Energy, has proven wrong those who are convinced that Government can't do something right. At the end of the Cold War, when the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver was designated as a Superfund site, it was estimated that it would take 70 years and nearly \$40 billion to clean it up. Many advocated a permanent quarantine of the site, arguing that its rehabilitation was not worth the cost. Frazer Lockhart took charge of the cleanup effort in 1995 and finished the job in 10 years, spending only \$7 billion. Today, 95 percent of the original site has been delisted from the Superfund and been set aside as a 6,200-acre wildlife refuge. Frazer's sound management and perseverance led to the cleanup 60 years ahead of schedule and \$30 billion under budget.

Mr. President, these stories are just a few of the countless many. Indeed, there are a great number of exceptional Federal employees, and I hope to continue sharing their stories before the Senate and honoring their service over the coming weeks and months, beginning with this group. I invite my fellow Senators to join me on those or other occasions in doing the same. These men and women daily carry out the work of developing new technologies, protecting our free markets, ensuring a cleaner environment, and advancing our interests around the world.

I believe the Founders foresaw the need for a vibrant and effective civil service and that they would be proud of the Federal employees serving today. When the first Congress convened in New York on March 4, 1789, its first matter of business was to fulfill an obligation set to it by the Constitution. Article VI declares that all public officers are to be bound by an oath or affirmation to support the Constitution, but the document leaves up to Congress to decide on the form.

The first piece of legislation ever to be passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by President Washington codified this simple but poignant oath:

I do solemnly swear or affirm that I will support the Constitution of the United States.

In the years since, it has been expanded to the oath presently taken by all of us who serve in this Chamber and in the House of Representatives and by every Federal employee. But the underlying point remains unchanged from that original oath. What the Founders intended in their first act of Government, and what we now reaffirm with each taking of our modern oath, is that everyone who serves in our Government is not only obligated to support

the Constitution but also entrusted with that responsibility. That trust—the same as was noted by Clay—is the foundation of our civil service. It is the guiding principle of our Federal workers and the reason they deserve the public's confidence.

Careers in Government, we know, frequently pay far less than comparable careers in the private sector, and many times our Federal employees are asked to move across the country or overseas to perform their duties. Many serve for 20 years or more, leaving a lasting impact on communities and on our national policies without special recognition. They never see bonuses like those paid on Wall Street or elsewhere in the private sector. However, after many years of service, when our civil servants retire, they can look back on their careers and know with certainty that when their country needed them, they gave of themselves. They gave to our Nation, and they know their contribution, even if little recognized, has been genuine and significant. This is their bonus, the satisfaction and the knowledge that they have answered the call to duty, that their lives have surely served a meaningful purpose.

Again, please let it be noted that the first week of May each year is Public Service Recognition Week, and it is with great pride that I honor the service and sacrifice of our Federal employees. I thank them, and I urge my colleagues to join me this week and in future weeks to thank them for their continued work in support of our recovery during this challenging time.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAUFMAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

HELPING FAMILIES SAVE THEIR HOMES ACT OF 2009

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 896, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 896) to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability.

Pending:

Dodd/Shelby amendment No. 1018, in the nature of a substitute.

Corker amendment No. 1019 (to amendment No. 1018), to address safe harbor for certain servicers.